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11 AUG 1978

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Strategic Research
FROM: Director of Central Intelligence
SUBJECT: Soviet Naval Readiness
REFERENCES: Memo from D/OSR, dtd 26 July 1978 [redacted]
same subject; "Soviet Military Readiness,"
March 1978, [redacted]

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1. With reference to the SecDef's desire that we take the lead on a study about Soviet naval readiness procedures and your memo on that subject of 26 July, I think we need to look at this problem in a slightly different light. I've read your pamphlet on Soviet military readiness. It is an excellent rundown on what quantity of Soviet forces is likely to be ready at given periods of alert and why. What I believe interests the SecDef, however, is how the Soviets go about maintaining the readiness capability of their various units, taking the navy as a first example. Clearly, they operate at sea less than we. Does this mean then that if they go to sea in an emergency they will be less prepared? Does this mean that if they expect war to come they are counting on several weeks to train their crews and check out their equipments?

2. For instance, in the Mediterranean even when they are deployed we note that the Soviet fleet spends a higher percentage of its time at anchor or in port than does ours (I believe). Under these conditions, would they be as ready from both a materiel and a personnel point of view to hit the target on the first shot as we are? What the SecDef and I are both interested in is in part whether the Soviets have some better way of maintaining materiel and personnel readiness with less exercise opportunity and expense.

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3. Beyond this, when the SecDef asked us to get into a military issue like this as the lead agent, I think we ought to be very interested in taking him up on his request. There are lots of ways we don't get invited into the military scene. Clearly, if we prove our value when we are needed and wanted, we'll get better access in the long run.

4. I'd appreciate your rethinking this issue.



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STANSFIELD TURNER



cc: Acting NIO/CF

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